

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Presented below is a complete set of claims with current status indicators.

1. – 32. (canceled)

33. (new) A method of creating an on-line character using an information network including a database, at least one character-enabled network site and a user interface, said method comprising:

storing a plurality of character data in the database, the character data including at least one of audio data and visual image data;

storing a plurality of character-attribute data in the database, the character-attribute data including at least one of audio data and visual image data;

linking the character attribute data with one or more of the character data;

presenting to the user interface through the character-enabled site, one or more character data defining one or more characters for selection by the user;

upon selection of a character, presenting in real time to the user interface through the character-enabled site, the selected character along with at least one of the character-attribute data linked to the selected character for selection by the user;

upon selection of a character attribute, presenting in real time to the user interface through the character-enabled site, the selected character including the selected attribute;

storing data in the database indicative of the selected character and selected character attributes, the selected character and selected character attributes collectively defining a character persona;

storing a plurality of character-persona data in the database, the character-persona data including at least one of audio presentations and visual image presentations;

linking the character-persona data with one or more of the character-attribute data; and

presenting to the user interface through the character-enabled site, one or more character persona data linked to the character persona.

34. (new) The method of claim 33 wherein the character created is a human character and each character attribute comprises at least one of a physical characteristic, emotional characteristic and personal interest of the character.

35. (new) The method of claim 33 wherein the plurality of character-persona data comprise at least one of either a passive presentation and an interactive presentation, each in turn comprising at least one of either a visual image displayed on the user interface and sound heard through the user interface.

36. (new) The method of claim 35 wherein, when an interactive presentation is provided to the user interface, the method further comprises the step of, in response to user interaction with the interactive presentation, providing to the user interface at least one of either an audio presentation and a visual image presentation selected from the plurality of presentations.

37. (new) The method of claim 36 further comprising the step of storing data indicative of user interaction with the interactive presentation.

38. (new) The method of claim 33 wherein the character-enabled network site comprises a plurality of pages and the plurality of character-persona data comprise at least one link to one of the pages.

39. (new) The method of claim 33 wherein the information network comprises a plurality of other network sites and the plurality of character-persona data comprises at least one link to one of the other network sites.

40. (new) The method of claim 33 wherein the information network comprises a plurality of other character-enabled network sites, the plurality of character-persona data comprises at least one link to one of the other character-enabled network sites and the other character-enabled network sites are adapted to present to the user interface a presentation of the character persona.

41. (new) The method of claim 40 further comprising the step of, when the user accesses another character-enabled network site, providing the character-persona to that character-enabled network site and within the other character-enabled network sites, presenting to the user interface a presentation of the character persona.

42. (new) The method of claim 41 wherein the step of providing the character persona to the character-enabled network site accessed by the user comprises the step of transferring the data indicative of the character and character attributes as a cookie to the character-enabled network site.

43. (new) The method of claim 33 further comprising, storing data in the database indicative of the number of times a character attribute is selected.

44. (new) The method of claim 33 further comprising:

storing a plurality of character sub-attribute data in the database, the character sub-attribute data including at least one of audio data and visual image data;

linking the character sub-attribute data with one of the character-attribute data;

upon selection of a character attribute, presenting in real time to the user interface through the character-enabled site, at least one of the character sub-attribute data linked to the selected character attribute for selection by the user; and

storing data in the database indicative of the number of times a character attribute is selected and the number of times a character sub-attribute linked to the character attribute is selected.

45. (new) An on-line data collection and presentation system comprising:

a database having stored therein a plurality of character data including at least one of audio data and visual image data, a plurality of character-attribute data linked with one or more of the character data, the character-attribute data including at least one of audio data and visual image data, and a plurality of character-persona data linked with one or more of the character-

attribute data, the character-persona data including at least one of audio presentations and visual image presentations;

a processor programmed to:

present to a user interface, one or more of the character data defining one or more characters for selection by the user;

upon selection of a character, present in real time to the user interface, the selected character along with at least one of the character-attribute data linked to the selected character for selection by the user;

upon selection of a character attribute, present in real time to the user interface, the selected character including the selected attribute;

present to the user interface, one or more character-persona data linked to the character persona; and

store data in the database indicative of the selected character and selected character attributes collectively defining a character persona.

46. (new) The apparatus of claim 45 wherein the plurality of character-persona data comprises at least one of either a passive presentation and an interactive presentation, each in turn comprising at least one of a visual image displayed on the user interface and sound heard through the user interface.

47. (new) The apparatus of claim 46 wherein the processor is further programmed to provide to the user interface at least one of either an audio presentation and a visual image presentation selected from the plurality of character-persona data in response to user interaction with an interactive presentation.

48. (new) The apparatus of claim 47 wherein the processor is further programmed to store data in the database indicative of user interaction with the interactive presentation.

49. (new) In an information network having a database and at least one character-enabled network site, a method of sharing data among network users, said method comprising:

storing a plurality of character data in the database, the character data including at least one of audio data and visual image data;

storing a plurality of character-attribute data in the database, the character-attribute data including at least one of audio data and visual image data;

linking the character attribute data with one or more of the character data;

providing for the creation of on-line characters by:

presenting to a user interface through the character-enabled site, one or more character data defining one or more characters for selection by the user;

upon selection of a character, presenting in real time to the user interface through the character-enabled site, the selected character along with at least one of the character-attribute data linked to the selected character for selection by the user;

upon selection of a character attribute, presenting in real time to the user interface through the character-enabled site, the selected character including the selected attribute;

storing data in the database indicative of the selected character and selected character attributes collectively defining a character persona;

providing to at least one user interface a presentation of the created character of another user including the data associated with the selected character and selected character attributes defining the character persona; and

providing a communications link between the users.